

# The Planning Process

## Overview

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has set guidelines for its planning process both internally, and through its planning partnership with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).

The responsibility for the production of a long-range plan for INDOT lies with the [Long Range Transportation Planning Section](#) of the Division of Environment, Planning, and Engineering. This effort relies on data, expertise, and input from a wide range of people within the Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), MPOs, and others. The core function of the Long Range Transportation Planning Section is to identify and strategically address Indiana's long-term transportation needs. Elements within this function include conducting corridor studies, coordinating the state and metropolitan long range plans, and ultimately, producing an INDOT long range plan.

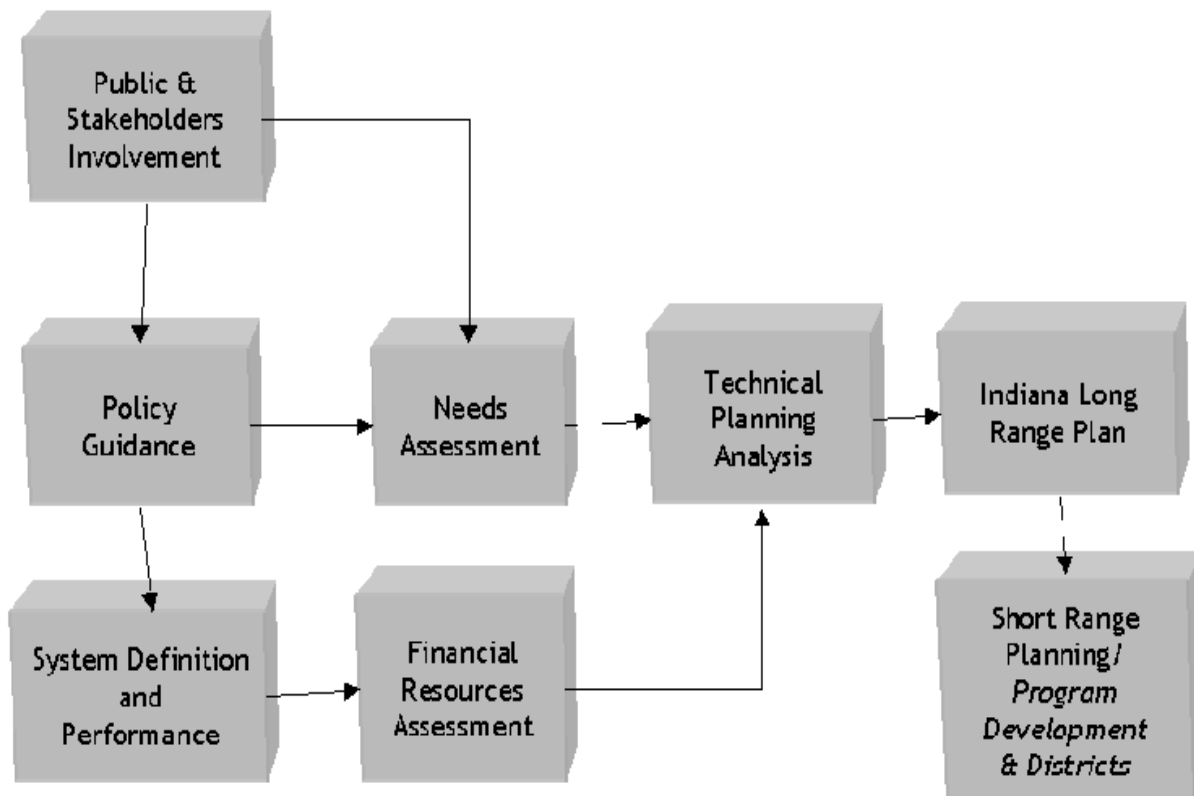
Production of a long range plan is a continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive activity. All state and local transportation planning is subject to FHWA planning regulations. The most recent set of regulations is derived from the 1998 Federal transportation bill, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). The INDOT long range planning process is consistent with TEA-21. The values and goals embedded in the Federal planning regulations are expressed through the identification of Statewide Planning Factors. These planning factors are listed below.

- Support economic vitality of the United States, the States and metropolitan areas, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency.
- Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users.
- Increase accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight.
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life.
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the State, for people and freight.
- Promote efficient system management and operation.
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

INDOT also follows the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in the development of Indiana's transportation planning process. NEPA sets a vision for how the government should work to incorporate protection and enhancement of the environment into its decisions and actions. It was enacted to ensure that information on the environmental impact of any Federally funded action is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken. Under NEPA, INDOT includes in its planning process environmental, social, as well as economic and technical considerations.

## Long Range Plan Development Process

The overall statewide transportation planning process is outlined in the following flowchart. The process consists of eight steps, starting with the outreach for public and key transportation stakeholder involvement and ending with the short range programming of specific Transportation improvements within the INDOT production



schedule. The organization of this transportation plan document reflects the flow of activities outlined.

### Policy Oversight Committee

To provide overall policy guidance and inter-divisional coordination for the INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan update process a policy oversight committee was established. This group is chaired by the Deputy Commissioner for the Office of Planning and Intermodal Transportation with the Division Chiefs of the Division of Environment, Planning and Engineering, the Multimodal Division and the Program Development Division and other Executive Staff members. The Policy Oversight Committee has authority over the entire range of transportation planning activities carried out by INDOT and provides the coordination necessary to develop the department's Long-Range Transportation Plan. The Policy Oversight Committee approves major Long-Range Transportation Plan elements and new project recommendations.

### Technical Coordination Committee

The development of the INDOT Long-Range Transportation Plan and the selection of transportation improvement projects requires the involvement of a number of different sections within INDOT. A Technical Coordination Committee was established to provide for the involvement of a number of different sections from the Division of

Environment, Planning and Engineering, the Multimodal Division and the Program Development Division. These include the long-range transportation planning section, the programming section, the relinquishment section, the traffic statistics section, the rail section, the public transportation section and the aviation section. A key component of the Technical Coordination Committee is the Program Management Group (PMG) for expansion projects established by the Program Development Division's programming section to evaluate new added capacity projects submitted in the annual call for projects for programming in INDOT's production schedule. The Technical Coordination Committee screens new projects being evaluated for inclusion in the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Based upon the review and recommendation of the Technical Coordination Committee candidate projects are passed to the Policy Oversight Committee for approval.